

Message Text

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16

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ADP-00 IO-12 INT-08 SCEM-02

CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01

SIL-01 TRSE-00 CIEP-02 OMB-01 NIC-01 DODE-00 PM-09

H-02 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01

/159 W

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P R 151212 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6658

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USINT CAIRO

USMISSION USUN

USMISSION OECD PARIS

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (P A R A . 3 . , L I N E S 1 & 2)

BEIRUT FOR LABATT

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB ENRG PFOR KU

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SUBJECT: TRADE UNION CALL
FOR SYMBOLIC OIL STOPPAGE ON MAY 15.

REF: CAIRO 1340

SUMMARY: GOVERNMENT OF KUWAIT (GOK) AFTER SOME INDECISION HAS AGREED TO FOLLOW LIBYA, ALGERIA, AND IRAQ IN ONE HOUR OIL STOPPAGE MAY 15 TO MARK TWENTY-FIFTH ANIVERSARY QUOTE LOSS OF PALESTINE UNQUOTE. AS NO TANKERS PRESENTLY LOADING KUWAIT, ECONOMIC IMPACT OF STOPPAGE MINIMAL ALTHOUGH ACTION DOES REPRESENT SYMBOLIC LINKING OF OIL EXPORTS WITH ARAB CONFRONTATION WITH ISRAEL. END SUMMARY

1. AFTER THREE DAYS OF SHIFTING FROM ONE FOOT TO THE OTHER GOK FINALLY DECIDED LATE LAST NIGHT TO JOIN ARAB TRADE UNIONIST CALL FOR ONE HOUR STOPPAGE (0900-1000 GMT) OF OIL DELIVERIES TO MARK TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF QUOTE LOSS OF PALESTINE UNQUOTE. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL GOVERNEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT BROADCAST MIDNIGHT MAY 14, MOVE WAS TAKEN BY KUWAIT AS PART OF JOINT ACTION ALONG WITH LIBYA, ALGERIA, AND IRAQ. SAUDIA ARABIA, ACCORDING PRESS REPORTS HERE, REFUSED JOIN IN THIS SYMBOLIC CUTOFF.

2. SCENARIO BEGAN MAY 12 WHEN TWO EGYPTIAN REPRESENTATIVES FROM RECENTLY CONCLUDED ARAB TRADE UNIONS CONFERENCE ARRIVED IN TOWN TO RAISE CALL FOR ONE HOUR MAY 15 CUT OFF. MOVE WOULD IN WORDS OF DELEGATES, QUOTE COME AS EXPRESSION ARAB RESENTMENT OF UNLIMITED U. S. SUPPORT TO ISRAEL UNQUOTE. IN SUBSEQUENT FORTY- EIGHT HOURS, TRADE UNIONS, WHO CLOSELY LINKED TO GOVERNMENT HERE, CLEARLY LOOKED TO GOK MINISTER OF LABOR AYAR AND MINISTER FINANCE AND OIL ATIQUI FOR CUE. ACCORDING TO OIL INDUSTRY SPOKESMAN, GOK ON ITS PART NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT STOPPAGE BUT FELT IT WOULD HAVE TO GO ALONG WITH MOVE IF MAJORITY OF OTHER ARAB OIL PRODUCERS HEEDED CALL FROM CAIRO. THUS, WHEN LATE ON THE 14 TH WORD CAME THROUGH OF IRAQI, ALGERIAN AND LIBYAN SUPPORT FOR THE TRADE UNIONISTS, KUWAIT ALSO APPROVED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE ONE HOUR HALT. IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER, ATIQUI

FLEW TO RIYADH FOR BRIEF VISIT.

3. COMMENT: IMMEDIATE ECONOMIC IMPLICATION OF STOPPAGE MINIMAL AS KOC, COUNTRY' S MAIN OIL EXPORTER, REPORTS NO TANKERS NOW SCHEDULED FOR LOADING ON

MAY 15. ONE CANNOT OVERLOOK, HOWEVER, SYMBOLIC
IMPORTANCE OF ACTION WHICH COMES ON HEELS OF
RECENT SAUDI AND ABU DHABI STATEMENTS ON LINKAGE
OF OIL AND PALESTINE PROBLEM. ALSO CONSISTENT
WITH TENDENCY OF GULF PRODUCERS TO CONSIDER MORE
THAN THEY HAVE IN PAST, USING OIL AS POLITICAL
WEAPON IN CONFRONTATION WITH ISRAEL.
MCCLELLAND

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